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St. John, Oliver Starr

Moses; or, The man who supposes himself to be Moses, no Moses at all.

New York, 1866.

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MOSES

"I WILL BE YOUR MOSES."

ANDREW JOHNSON.

NEW YORK:

AMERICAN NEWS CO., 119 & 121 NASSAU ST.

D. EDWARDS, 9 Beekman St.

1866.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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OR,

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Oliver Starr St. John

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PREFACE.

'Tis said that Andrew Johnson s'poses
That he's a genuine second Moses :
As certain folks don't seem to know it,
I've writ this truthful book to show it ;
I rather think you'd better buy it,
And when you've read, you wont deny it,
That Andy is as much like Moses
As bramble bushes are like roses.
The drollest Hebrew since the flood,
Without a drop of Jewish blood.

"MOSES."

THE TWO FOUNDLINGS.

When little Moses was a baby,
Miss Pharaoh found him, dear good lady,
Kindly drew him from the river,
Kissed away his tears and quiver,
Furnished cash and education,
And placed him in a princely station.

But when he came to be a man,
Back to the Hebrews straight he ran ;
Preferring toil in brick and stone,
Rather than sit on Egypt's throne ;
His natural love of kindred race,
No rank or riches could efface.

In tracing Andy's early history,
I think you'll find a similar mystery ;
For when the loyal people found him,
He was a Democratic foundling,
Bellowing on Secessia's billows
In Union ark of stolen willows.

We raised him up with cheerful voice,
To highest places in our choice,
A nobler gift than Pharaoh's crown,
Or kingly greatness and renown ;
But instinct ruled—he soon "made tracks"
For his old friends, the Democrats.

BRAVE BEGINNINGS.

Moses, upon his first essay,
The Union cause did not betray.
Seeing a brother's hardship, grief,
Faithful, he ran to his relief;
Saved him from the oppressor's hand,
Whom slain, he buried in the sand.

But when he chode a Hebrew knave
Wronging his helpless fellow-slave,
He feared the petty tyrant's scorn,
Lost his courage—fled forlorn—
Deserted Freedom's holy cause,
Sure of conservative applause.

When Johnson took the chair of state,
He seemed an upright magistrate.
"Back seats for traitors!—they must learn
"That treason's odious—no return
"For them, to place of power or trust,
"Till they've repented in the dust."

But soon he cowered beneath the threat
Of haughty Southrons, who beset
And clamored round him. They prevailed,
Scorning the craven as he quailed,
And using now as pliant tool—
Though once they called him knave and fool.

AARON AND SEWARD.

As Moses' voice was slow, and weaker
Than Aaron's, he became chief speaker.
He once set up a golden calf,
And made the people dance and laugh;
It was a most outrageous folly,
The times were sober—far from jolly.

Just so with Seward—Andy's spokesman,
He wheedles fools, cajoles and jokes 'em.
In darksome days he talked so silly,
'Twas not the statesman spoke, but *Billy;*
"In ninety days 'twill all be over:
"Hurrah! my boys! let's romp in clover!"

In reading his politic speeches,
I can't but think of brandy peaches,
I love to suck the pulp so juicy,
Till I suspect I'm getting boosy,
Thereafter, when my lips I've smacked,
I find the nut is still uncracked.

And yet we owe him hearty thanks
For cunning, diplomatic pranks:
He kept the foreigners befuddled,
Until the rebels we had cudgelled,
And then he wrote such thundrous papers,
That France and England stopped their capers.

JETHRO AND BEECHER.

Andy has had a call from Beecher,
As Moses, from the Midian preacher:
But Jethro made his visits brief—
Advised, then left the Hebrew chief;
And so, I think, our Brooklyn shepherd
Had better leave the spotted leopard.

Come back, thou errant friend of Freedom,
'Tis not the place for thee in Edom,
A stranger and an alien there,
You cannot breathe its tainted air;
Nor tarry in that wicked camp,
Composed of rebel, traitor, scamp.

In stirring days of Kansas rifles—
Were treason and oppression trifles?
When traitors trampled on our banner,
And in a fierce, defiant manner
Swore that the Union should be sundered,
Ah! then! how Plymouth Pulpit thundered!

Talk not too soon of "fatted calf,"
Lest people think it's *you*—and laugh.
Till Southrons learn that treason's crime
Let them eat "hominy and swine."
When that shall make the rascals feel,
We'll give them mutton chops and veal.

"LITTLE VILLAINS."

I s'pose you've noticed how that Andy
In aping Moses finds it handy
To have a set of tricksters by,
Like Korah and his company;
For otherwise, you plainly see
My story lacks analogy.

Take Thurlow Weed and join with Dathan,
Invoke a little divination,
Then place them on a proper level,
You'll find you're getting near the Devil;
Because you know, if you're observant,
The master lives quite near his servant.

When Raymond reads the genial story
About that "little villain," Korah,
I wonder if the culprit flinches
Whene'er the shoe, symbolic, pinches:
I s'pose he don't—he's almost ripe
For what befell his prototype.

A yawning chasm swallowed up
Proud Korah and his cursed troop;
Dixon and all who go that way,
Should take the warning while they may,
For Freedom's besom soon will sweep
Them all into Oblivion's deep.

FALSE PROPHETS.

Who's Andy's Balaam ?—as it looks
It may be Marble, Wood, or Brooks ;
Their as'nine nature they betray
By their eternal jackass bray;
Yet Balaam *tried* to lie and couldn't—
They can—but speak the truth they wouldn't.

Whene'er the Blairs near Andy pass
No doubt he thinks of Balaam's ass,
Although the brute conversed with reason,
And they talk nonsense, trash and treason.
Perhaps I do the donkey wrong—
I don't the Blairs—in this true song.

Balaam, I think, would thus express
His own opinion of the Press—
"The *Herald* is my antitype
"In deviltry of every stripe—
"We lied, spoke truth, blew cold and hot,
"According to the *cash* we got."

How would the fellow curse and blow me
Could he but find me out and know me,
For though he deals in truth for pelf,
He hates to hear it of himself ;
He has a mighty share in Balaam,
No doubt in Charon's boat he'll hail him.

HONEST MEN.

From men like Esop's cat so mealy,
Turn now to Tilton, Horace Greeley,
And other fearless exponents
Of true Republic sentiments.
Andy delights in, and commends
Caleb and Joshua, Moses' friends.

They said, "March in without delay
And take possession while we may."
And this advice was good and wise,
But overborne by other spies
Who told of giants, beasts of prey,
And many dangers in the way.

All this our President remembers
And says, through Democratic members,
"The South is full of F. F. V.
"And South Carolina Chivalry,
"They only have exclusive rights,
"The rest are niggers and mean whites."

But Greeley cries—"All rights for all!
"On this firm rock we stand or fall!"
And *there* thou standest—faithful, brave,
Unmoved by fear, or wind, or wave,
While others fail us in the storm,
We never miss thy noble form!

SERPENTS AND COPPERHEADS.

The faithless Jews in courage failed;
Then fiery Serpents them assailed—
Would straight upon them swiftly spring
With deadly bite and mortal sting;
Andy, in his Mosaic net,
Could not, it seems, the snakes forget.

So Johnson, thinking that the breed
Of Copperheads had been decreed,
Esteems it foremost of his duties
To be the showman of these beauties,
Also a kindness to invite us
Where these infernal sneaks may bite us.

I mean the viper—not the man,
If I should name Vallandigham,
And hope "my friend" Fernandy Wood
Will think my personal feelings good,
Finding his name among the vermin
In this my true, symbolic sermon.

For you observe that I am preaching
Out of the Bible—Gospel teaching:
These mimic reptiles ought to fear
The oldest Serpent mentioned there,
For in their case 'tis clearly shown
The Devil gets and holds his own.

QUAIL AND DUCK.

Each day, no doubt, at morning prayers
Reading his Bible, he prepares
Moses the first to imitate—
A chicken on his breakfast plate
Suggests the miracle of quails—
Upon "dead duck" he then regales.

But at the time he swallowed Forney,
He must have found it was a thorny
Sort of fish—and not a fowl.
For he has made poor Andy howl,
And caused, without a doubt or question,
An awful fit of indigestion :

Which shows that Andy sometimes fails—
Mistaking Radicals for quails,
Which he could easily devour
Or scare and scatter in an hour :
But he'll discover his mistake
When by-and-by they get awake.

For he could count the quails of Moses
More easily than count the noses
Of freemen, who, in must'ring crowds
Like myriad birds and thund'rous clouds,
Will send a roar which he'll remember
Before the end of next November.

ON CANAAN'S BORDERS.

When once almost upon the borders
Of Canaan, Moses changed his orders—
And so, instead of entering in,
Turned to the wilderness of Zin;
And then, through many weary years,
They wandered in distress and fears.

When Lee succumbed, the South, in terror,
Convicted of its guilt and error,
Implored us humbly on its knees,
"Give us, Dear Sirs, whate'er you please."
And Lincoln soothed with accents mild,
As father pities erring child.

Our Canaan, then, was near at hand;
Peace would have reigned through all the land;
Impartial law and equal right
Without regard to black or white,
They would have taken, we have given—
Alas!—our Moses went to Heaven.

Then Johnson's "Policy" absurd
Was followed, and the people erred;
Turned to a wilderness of sin,
Strife and dissensions rose again—
Some men betrayed us, some deserted,
Our counsels thus were disconcerted.

ANDY GETS ANGRY.

Moses at Kadesh thirsty station,
Smote the rock with indignation—
Instead of *speaking*, as directed ;
Reproved for this, he was rejected
As Leader of the Jewish band,
To enter in the Promised Land.

So Andy's grave, it is recorded,
Must surely be this side of Jordan :
Canaan with us he cannot reach,
Since his improper, angry speech—
Or rather his *intemperate* say,
On our Great Hero's Natal Day.

A motley crowd of dirty brats,
Of traitors, rebels, Democrats,
Composed his audience—then he spoke
In vulgar phrase and ribald joke ;
But Moses differs here from Andy,
For *he* drank water—Johnson, brandy.

When Andrew Johnson brought disgrace
Upon that day and name and place,
His treacherous "policy" announced,
Our noblest statesmen false denounced,
Millions of Freemen solemn swore
His lead they'd follow never more.

SPIES AND LIES.

Andy should take Mosaic hints,
In noting the coincidence
Which evident and open lies,
Between his own and Jewish spies.
For falsehood in the ancient day,
As now, held truth beneath its sway.

Moses sent twelve exploring youth;
How many, think you, told the truth?
Why, two alone of all the dozen—
The rest agreed to lie and cozen—
Proving that ten of this committee
Were Democrats—it was a pity—

For by their cheating, false report,
"My policy" prevailed at court,
The nation lost the looked-for rest,
Wandered in famine, war, and pest,
Through deserts dreary, trackless, wide,
Till all the generation died.

So Fullerton and Steedman's tour
Was foreordained, you may be sure—
Sent by Mosaic destiny,
Their proper business was to lie,
The Freedmen's Bureau to assail,
And misery on the South entail.

DIVINE SLAVERY.

Oh, Johnson, you're a second Pharaoh !
Born, not at Goshen, but at Cairo.
By instinct, taste, and education,
You surely sprung from Egypt's nation —
A victim of accursed Slavery,
Robbed of your manhood by its knavery.

The gen'ral facts are briefly these :
Egypt, when ruled by King Ramses,
Believed that slavery was divine,
Just as your countrymen and mine
Accepted this *inspired* solution
Of "the peculiar institution."

And Bishop Hopkins—he was there—
Lord and Van Dyke, ordained to swear—
" It's Heaven's enjoined, appointed will—
" Imbrute God's Image, feed with swill,
" Chain it and fetter, burden, yoke it,
" Chastise and cuff it, strangle, choke it."

As holy preachers taught this creed,
Rulers and people all agreed
'Twas pious duty to assent—
Best for the "slave to be content;"
And those who favored Abolition,
Should be consigned to black perdition.

SLAVE BREEDERS.

Now Egypt is the symbol land
Of hard Oppression's heavy hand,
The same in Valley of the Nile
Or Mississippi—cruel, vile ;
And Pharaoh is a Typic name
Of free America's crowning shame.

As with Egyptians, so with us—
Slavery, a moral incubus,
Corrupted conscience, reason, laws,
Gained public honor and applause,
While with its iron heel it crushed
A lowly race, whose cries were hushed.

Virginia, gallant, boastful, bred them,
Like swine and cattle raised and fed them,
In market place and shamble sold
Their kindred flesh and blood for gold ;
Consigned to social, moral slaughter
The souls of brother, son, and daughter.

Ah me ! To tell of Afric's wrong
Is not within the power of song !
The slave-pens, traders, auction blocks,
The thumb-screws, shackles, scourges, stocks,
The cruel driver, cheerless hovel—
How *could* they otherwise than grovel ?

"LET MY PEOPLE GO."

The bondmen cried to Heaven. Their groan
Ascended to the Eternal Throne.
The Hebrews' God in anger spake
As when his wrath made Egypt shake,
Threat'ning the land with sim'lar woe—
"Release my people—let them go!"

Anointed prophets gave the warning—
Phillips and Cheever, insult scorning—
And Lovejoy, freely giving life,
And Beecher, 'mid the Kansas strife,
And Garrison and other seers
Foretold the coming vengeful years.

But Commerce, Church and State protested;
For though their conscience was arrested,
Their Great Diana was assailed;
And if these doctrines but prevailed,
And slavery with its power go down,
Their Idol, Gain, would lose his crown.

At length the Just and Righteous Lord
Unsheathed his furbished, flaming sword.
Tempestuous war, with fire and flood,
Deluged the land in tears and blood:
Millions of treasure burnt and wasted,
Houses and lands destroyed and blasted.

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.

With what reluctance Pharaoh bowed
Beneath the scourge of Heaven and vowed
To free and let the bondmen go,
His pledge so often broke doth show;
For love of power had such control
Of this despotic Ruler's soul.

The South, I fear, abolished slavery
More from dread than from the bravery
Which springs from justice, truth and love,
And Grace descending from above.
Before the wrong they would expel,
What dire calamities befell!

And now, with strange infatuation
They cling to foolish calculation
Only to *loosen* not to break
The yoke from off the negro's neck,
And, under false disguise, retain
The whip, the burden, and the chain.

They fight against the Living Lord,
Against His Providence and Word,
Against the most undoubted proof
That He doth never stand aloof
From poor and lowly ones opprest,
And all injustice doth detest.

THE RED SEA.

Egypt with plagues was scathed and wasted;
Then Pharaoh and his servants hasted
To manumit the captive Jews—
But afterwards they changed their views,
And chased them to the Red Sea shore,
Determined slavery to restore :

It was a God-defying act,
Perfidious toward the solemn pact
With Freedmen and the Freedmen's Lord,
False to the Nation's plighted word.
It was their fatal guilt enormous;
How should their doom instruct and warn us !

For Johnson and his friends endorse
And follow on the wicked course
Egypt's *conservatives* pursued ;
How striking the similitude !
How mad is this "my policy,"
An open, bold apostacy.

At Philadelphia they assembled—
A few were duped, but most dissembled;
Said General Dix, "We'll bring them back !"
Meaning—"We'll re-enslave the black !"
"Restore to tyrants full possession
"Of power to use their old oppression."

PLOTTING INJUSTICE.

The Memphian hosts beneath the waves
Found sudden, certain, awful graves,
Because they dared Almighty God,
Who lately had before them trod
In stately steppings—in the flash
Of lightning, whirlwind, earthquake-crash.

Their ruin speaks in thunder tones
To peoples, governments and thrones:
"Beware of trifling with the Right,
" Or challenging Jehovah's might;
"Whoever on his buckler rush
" Justice and wrath will surely crush."

Our Rebel-Copperhead alliance
Is madly bent on this defiance,
Training the Democratic host
For marching to the Red Sea coast,
Where trembling Freedmen now sojourn,
To seize and hasten their return.

Oh, God of Right, stretch forth thy mighty arm,
Suffer them not thy fleeing saints to harm!
Open a pathway in the troubled Sea,
And let the Earth Thy great Salvation see,
Their rash pursuers fill with blind delusion,
Vex and engulf and drown them in confusion!

"DO JUSTLY!"

My countrymen! awake to action.
Come forth and overthrow this faction;
'Tis dangerous to the Nation's life—
A root of bitterness and strife.
If it succeeds, the nation dies;
For God Almighty it defies.

From Him no peace can we expect
Unless the Negro we protect.
We promised to secure his right
When we engaged him in the fight—
Justice that promise will require,
Or send us mildew, sword and fire.

For He who governeth the world,
Old Dagon from his seat hath hurled,
And those who strive to raise him up
Are madly bent to fill the cup
Of God's unmingled wrath. Beware,
Lest pouring out that cup he swear,

As unto Moses and the Jews,
When they did Canaan's rest refuse—
"This generation, stupid, blind,
"And reprobate of heart and mind,
"Shall wander on, with peace unblest,
"Nor ever enter into rest."

BETRAYED—NOT LOST.

But falter not nor be dismayed
Though Liberty has been betrayed,
God hath it in his holy keeping—
The tears and sighs of captives weeping,
Are bottled up, and written down
In the Great Book before the Throne.

He led our Fathers. We have seen
The cloudy, fiery pillar's sheen
Shining, a never-failing guide
To those who in His word abide.
In recent trouble, doubt, alarm,
What rescued us but His right arm?

When Victory came, and we were proud,
He laid Great Lincoln in his shroud,
And sent the man whose acts and name
Have brought dishonor, grief, and shame,
And gath'ring clouds appear portentous
Betokening events momentous.

But yet the Nation shall not die,
If on His guidance we rely,
And not on human might or power;
Then shall we stand a lofty tower—
A beacon for the tempest-tossed,
A home and refuge for the lost.

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